

Deputy Administrator's Listening Post
July 20, 2006

The following topics were discussed at the Deputy Administrator's Listening Post held July 20, 2006:

Status of FY 2007 Budget: Action on the FY 2007 budget is progressing, but may not have final approval until late in the 1st quarter (November/December). As a result, ARS can expect a Continuing Resolution in the first part of the year. All indications so far are that the House and Senate conferees' action will have minimal impact on our budget.

Multiple Passwords: OCIO is working on linking Sharepoint and Network passwords with systems accessed through ARIS. However, since we don't have control over NFC systems, consolidation of those passwords is not possible at this time.

AgLearn:

1. Resetting Passwords: Concerns were raised regarding how cumbersome and time consuming it is to get your AgLearn password reset. Response: The Department is in the process of changing the password resetting procedures by establishing several questions in the system to be answered by the user. If you forget your password, you answer one or more of these questions and the system will allow you to reset your password immediately. However, the revised procedure is still pending from the Department.
2. Mandatory AgLearn training for non-Federal employees: Concerns were expressed about how to perform mandatory training for state employees when AgLearn is only accessible to Federal Employees. Also, it takes too long for new Federal employees to get access to AgLearn. Response: ARS OCIO is checking with the Department for guidance on non-Federal employee access to AgLearn and possibility of using a CD for the training. As far as how to obtain e-Authentication credentials more quickly, the Department has not made any changes to the current procedure which links to the Agency payroll system.
3. Documenting Electronic Training: A question was raised regarding how electronic training will be documented in Aglearn as SF-182's are not required. Response: AgLearn has replaced the NFC TRAI system which tracked training taken. Eventually, all training will be requested and approved through AgLearn, regardless of whether the training is resident in AgLearn or is taken from an outside vendor. Courses taken on-line through AgLearn will automatically update your learning history file when complete. If the training is taken from an outside vendor, once the training is taken, the employee or Training Designee will enter the completion date in AgLearn and it will be recorded as completed in the database.

WGI Report for WG: HRD's HRIS system originally had reports that identifies within grade increases (WGI's) due dates for both General Schedule (GS) and Wage Grade (WG) employees. Now the WG report is not available. What happened to the report? Response: The WGI report for WG employees was found to have a calculation error, so the WGI date reflected in the report was incorrect. HRD removed the WG report from HRIS pending the correction by OCIO. In the meantime, if assistance is needed to figure out when WGI's are due for WG employees, an e-mail can be sent to HR-reports@ars.usda.gov mailbox and HRD will run and provide the report to the requester.

FDW/BRIO: A question was asked about the Financial Data Warehouse (FDW) BRIO report defaulting to prior years. Response: This is not really a default; the system will automatically show all years available in the database that can be selected. In order to re-run a certain report without having to change the data elements, BRIO reports can be saved to the desktop retaining the original data selection criteria. The report can be re-run multiple times without having to make the data element selections each time. See Enclosure 2 for the instructions.

eTravel: A question was asked whether we still had to use SATO/EDS now that a new contractor has been selected. Response: Northrup Grumman Mission Systems has been selected as the new eTravel vendor. It will take between 18-24 months to prepare for and implement the new system. Until the new system is up and running, we will continue the current contracts with SATO/EDS.

Web-based programs: A concern was raised regarding performance of several of our web-based systems at certain times of the day (access, slow processing, etc.). Response: Sometimes, these performance issues may not be related to the system itself, but rather the infrastructure supporting the system (e.g., bandwidth, telephone connections). Positive comments were received on how these programs have improved the ability to share information.

SharePoint: A concern was raised regarding SharePoint not sending e-mail alert notifications that the user's password is about to expire. Response: Per OCIO, SharePoint does not currently send an email to user's; however, once logged into the SharePoint site, the user can see when their password will expire at the right of the screen under the "User Information" as shown in the Enclosure 1. Also, there are instructions on how to change the password. If the password has already expired then that user cannot login to the SharePoint. All Area IT Specialists (AITS) have been trained, so they can reset passwords and help users for accessing the SharePoint site. Users can contact their local IT Helpdesk for their passwords reset requests. Once all users are migrated to Outlook and ARSNet, the problem will be eliminated as the password for the network provides automatic access to SharePoint with no additional SharePoint password; i.e., single sign-on functionality.

IAS Training: Refresher training on IAS for Contracting Officers would be appreciated by the locations. The comment was that the training they received was ok for the system, but didn't provide sufficient detail on the process, "before and after IAS." Response:

The AFM Training Steering Committee and the AFM Council will discuss and determine the best way to address additional IAS training needs. In the meantime, refer to the IAS web site for Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's) and the contact information for Mike Magee, IAS Help Desk at:

<http://www.afm.ars.usda.gov/initiatives/IAS/>

Convenience Checks: A concern was expressed about the potential for losing the ability to write convenience checks against the purchase card if used for program payments, such as payments to human nutrition study participants. Response: The Department continues to press the Agencies to reduce or eliminate the use of convenience. For program payments such as honoraria, compensation for participating in studies, etc., other payments methods need to be considered versus use of the convenience check. Acquisition and Property Division (APD) and Financial Management Division (FMD) are working together to propose alternatives.

LAO Manual: A request was made for a "multimedia training" resource that can be provided to new administrative employees. Response: There is a Pacific West Area/Midwest Area team working on an LAO Manual. This resource will be available electronically.

Standard LAO Position Description and Performance Standard Team: Jim Bradley announced that a team has been assembled and met this week (7/17-18) to develop a standardized position description and performance standards for LAO's. The team is being co-lead by Karen Brownell, Director, HRD, and Diane Strub, MWA Deputy Area Director and the other members include several DAD's and LAO's, and other HRD staff. The outcomes will include the best possible career ladder, an accurate description of what the LAO's do, and what the performance expectations are.

20% Matching on Specific Cooperative Agreements (SCA's): A concern was raised regarding a Native American cooperator having difficulty coming up with the 20% matching contributions due to their poor financial situation. Response: Another LAO offered to assist in determining "in kind" matching options, since they had a similar situation in their Area. Extramural Agreements Division will also contact the location to discuss options.

Enclosure 1

File Edit View Favorites Tools Help

Back Search Favorites 17 blocked Check AutoLink AutoFill Options

Address <https://arsnet.usda.gov/default.aspx> Go Links

Google Search

ARSnet Help

Home Programs Locations Research Bulletin Board Resources News ARSNet Team Sites Tools Training

ARSNet Home All sources

Home

- Programs
- Locations
- Research
- Bulletin Board
- Resources
- News
- ARSNet Team Sites
- Tools
- Training

List of Your Team Sites

My Team Sites	My Alerts
Frequently Asked Questions and Comments	View and Edit Alerts
Second Site!	View and Edit Alerts
1	

Links for You

All portal users

- SharePoint Orientation Video
- How to link SharePoint calendar to the Outlook?
- How do I add RSS feeds to a Sharepoint site?
- Request non-ARS user accounts
- Frequently Asked Questions and Comments
- How to Change Or Reset My Password (Non ARS Users Only)?
- How to Change My Password (ARS Employees Only)?

User Information (Beta)



User Name: ARSNET\ARSNET.USERS
Full Name: ARSNET USERS
Email: ARSNET.USERS@ARS.USDA.GOV
Phone: Error
Password Last Changed: 7/24/2006 12:14:59 PM
Password Expiration 90 Days Policy
Password will Expire After: **89 Days**

Instruction to report an error...

ARS Employees: Contact your IT support team.
Non-ARS Users: Report to your ARS contact person.
If issue can not be resolved by your IT support team then send an email to SharePoint@ars.usda.gov

Saving the Results

Purpose

To review and analyze the retrieved data at a later date, save the processed report to your hard-drive or network. BRIO documents can be saved with or without results. Saving the report with results allows you to open the report again and work with the data from the FDW, as it existed when you originally processed the report. Saving with results essentially takes a “snapshot” of the data at the time of processing. This is useful if you need to compare the data from week to week or month to month.



Even if you save the report with data, you can still re-process the report to return more current or different data by clicking the **Process** button and selecting the desired limits.

Steps To Saving A Report

Saving a report with results is a two-step process. You first have to configure BRIO to save the results, and then actually save the report. To save a report **with results**, follow these steps.

Step	Action
1	Select File/Save Options/Save Query Results with Document from the pull-down menu. The Save Query Results with Document window appears.
2	Make sure that the box next to “Query” is marked.
3	Click the OK button.
4	Select File/Save As from the pull-down menu. The Save File window appears.